THE

"HINDU MESSAGE"

A Weekly Review of Indian and World-Problems from the Hindu Standpoint.

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The **Hindu Message** stands for

(1) The Maintenance of British supremacy with self-government for India,

(2) Co-operation with the different communities of India without prejudice to Hindu Dharma,

(3) Education of the Hindus as an integral part of the Indian Nation,

(4) Advancement of Material prosperity on a spiritual basis and

(5) Dissemination of pure Hindu Culture.

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A Vision Of India.

BRAHMAPUTRA.

By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L.

From Manas lake that sleeps in sweet repose
Surrounded by the shining snow-crowned hills
Whence stream a hundred merry-voiced rills,
Each like a song that from a poet flows,
There comes like arrow swift that speeds and glows
The son of God whose sight with rapture fills
Our worldly hearts and Godward thoughts instills
As silent 'midst silences it flows.
At India's farthest eastern end it turns
Unwilling in its love to leave her plains
And seaward flows with its bright waters sweet
The golden Indian sun above it burns,
And as their gift our land abundant gains
Ever-renewed wealth, the child of fruitful heat.

The Hindu Message

THURSDAY EVENING 6. JUNE, 1918.

The Eastern Front and India.

We have always maintained in these columns that the Eastern or Asiatic front and theatre of War is the key to the crisis created by the War in Europe and the world at large. If our successes in Asia are maintained and the German arms are steadily forced to retire Westward, the time must soon come when the pressure on Germany from the East will become stringent, if not also irresistible. The War will, then, tend rapidly towards its inevitable termination. At present, no doubt, Germany makes her mightiest efforts in the Western front, and sustains them, too, with a persistence and determination which has made a deep impression on the minds of men everywhere. The most important centres of power of the Allies of the Entente and their most valued possessions and treasures are concentrated in the West. Hence they naturally devote their main efforts and greatest watchfulness to the military position in the Belgian, French, and Italian fronts, and it must be admitted that, if any of these positions are lost, all prestige will be lost, and in a moment. Still, we must not lose sight of the fact that what Germany cares for is only to maintain her position in the West to the end and to prevent it from being weakened, so as to avert the danger of an invasion by the French and British. Meanwhile, her attention is constantly directed towards Russia and her Eastern border generally: and there if she makes a diligent use of her military resources, she relies even more on the resources of her diplomacy. It is now well-known that she brought about the Russian revolution chiefly through her wily and unscrupulous diplomacy, and now she has used the Russian anarchy which followed it to her full advantage, chiefly by the skill with which her diplomatists have dealt with dismembered Russia,—with Finland in the North, the Ukraine in the South, Siberia and Turkestan in the East, and Poland in the West. Every one of these small and weak states lies prostrate at the heel of triumphant Germany, and their resources are being exploited for the benefit of the half-fed people of Germany and Austria. Germany, also, has practically converted the Black Sea into a German lake and hopes with the aid of her Turkish ally to recover the ground she has lost in Mesopotamia, Palestine, and elsewhere on the Asiatic theatre of the War. We think, therefore, that the successful career of Great Britain's Indian army on this front must be maintained and that that army must push rapidly Westward in order to be able to counteract German intrigues in Russia and the evil results of the Russian revolution and anarchy. To gain this end, the Indian army on the Mesopotamian and Palestinian fronts must be strengthened by every means; and so almost all the available trained regiments must be drafted into it. Only those needed for the defence of the frontier need be retained.

There are those who think that Germany is intending to invade and conquer India. Their fears seem to receive confirmation from the state-

ment of the Prime Minister that "the German tide stemmed in the West would turn towards the East." Of course this might happen in the sense that nothing is impossible under heaven. So far as India is concerned, His Gracious Majesty the Emperor and his Viceroy in India have informed us that we must offer all the assistance we can. The Emperor's gracious command will be obeyed, so that the defence of India might be fully provided for. At the same time we cannot but express the firm conviction we have that the advance of the Indian army on the Mesopotamian and Palestinian fronts will continue, and that the Egyptian army will also soon co-operate so as to render Germany's position in her Eastern border, whether in the Balkan or the Russian front, rapidly untenable. It is towards attaining this aim that the efforts of Great Britain must be steadily directed, whether in India or Egypt.

India has always been ready to support the cause of the Empire, and rendered all the help she can in the most ungrudging manner during all these four years. The Conference recently held at Conjeeveram has reaffirmed the resolve of South India to offer all the further help she is capable of rendering in the same cause. We have already pointed out that when the poll which has now become famous was proposed or taken, there was in fact no difference of opinion on the point submitted to the Conference, and that whatever difference existed was only formal, and that all were substantially agreed as to the need of raising a citizen army.

Our attention has been drawn to a letter in *New India* of May 15, written by Sir Subramania Iyer. We think that the warmth of his language is not at all justified by anything that happened at the Conference. No one there advocated the "un-Aryan attitude" or "the un-Aryan conduct" of refusing assent to the formation of a citizen army, but only said that the enthusiasm of India would rise to its maximum if the decision to form such an army were coupled with the early promise or announcement of the reforms already promised to us as the first considerable step towards the early grant of responsible government. Sir Subramania Iyer's references to the *Bhagavad-Gita* have absolutely no bearing in this connection,—for the proposal for the formation of a citizen army has no manner of connexion with the Hindu religion and is purely a matter of civil importance affecting also Mohammedans, Christians, Buddhists, and others. Moreover, Sir Subramania Iyer says:—"such un-Aryan conduct can never be justified by relying on the misbehaviour of those who for the moment are so unwisely obstructing the course of justice to us." We are not aware of any section of Indians who, for the gaining of their own ends, can be said "to *rely* on the misbehaviour" of those who oppose them. Such "misbehaviour" can never be of use to us, even though our opponents may hope to benefit by it, for the reason that it is a "misbehaviour," and it would be absurd in us to "*rely*" on it to advance any of our own aims.

Our conclusion, then, is that the Government and the people of India must leave no stone unturned to strengthen the Asiatic front in Mesopotamia, Palestine, Egypt, and elsewhere and to make a rapid and

successful advance in all these quarters against the common enemies of civilisation so as to make the pressure on them irresistible. In order to achieve this aim, India must muster her available forces on that front in full strength. India must also form an extensive defence force in order to relieve all the trained fighting men still available within her borders and send them on to take their places in the fighting line. But the response to this imperative call of duty need not, and should not, be deemed inconsistent with the reiteration, insistently continued, of her demand for those political concessions making in due time for that responsible government which alone can remove the keen sense of injury which Indians feel in being treated as an enslaved or dependent nationality, or can alone evoke her undoubted enthusiasm for the cause of the Empire to its fullest possible extent.

Two Great After-War Problems.

The civilised world is getting sick of a war which, as it develops, results in a growingly terrific sacrifice of precious human lives. The French and the Germans have sustained the greatest losses of all. It is doubtful if the former will ever again recover their vitality,—for, even before the War commenced, the decrease in the birth-rate in France had been so steady as to cause alarm. It is fortunate for the French that America has come into the struggle. Already Dr. Wilson has declared that he will not be content with sending only five million men to the fighting line in France, but will send whatever troops may be needed to overthrow the power of German militarism. This, we are sure, will save the French people from such further extensive sacrifices as they have so far incurred. As for the Germans, if the struggle is prolonged and they have to continue to undergo sacrifices of men similiar to those entailed till now, it is likely that they will reach a position even worse than that of the French. The British empire possesses extensive, and even inexhaustible, resources of man-power, and so is the most advantageously-situated of all for purposes of war. The longer the war lasts, the more stable and sure her future position will be as compared with the powers of Europe. Still, the terrible sacrifice of life entailed already by the war, and that which is yet in prospect, have made all civilised men especially the more sentimental section of them, to indulge the hope of, and set on foot schemes for, bringing about universal peace among the nations when this war has terminated. Their present resolve is to take the steps needed to put an end, once and for ever, to all possibilities of war in the future. Such is their abhorrence of war and its abominations.

Another problem arising from the circumstances under which this war orginated is that all nations should have,—in President Wilson's happy phrase—the right of self-determination. This war rose out of Gremany's attempt to overthrow the freedom of such small states as Belgium and Serbia. Italy entered into the war out of the desire to regain what her people have deemed their own but has been in Austrian possession, and Rumania out of the fear that Germany would, if she won, deprive her of her freedom. France which had already lost Alsace-

Lorraine, has for years entertained a deadly fear of German aggression. That the Germans desire to establish their dominance in the world everywhere must be now fully clear to all, for she has used both the power of her arms and of her diplomacy to enslave the various parts of Russia after the late Revolution had brought about her dismemberment. The face of Europe has been entirely changed by these events, and the question now is whether Germany is to become the supreme arbiter of the destinies of Europe, or the European peoples, great and small, have, as before, the right to the enjoyment of their national freedom.

We will deal first with the latter problem. A distinguished Frenchman M. Albert Thomas, speaking at a meeting held in the Mansion-House, London, to further the objects of the Anglo-French Society, said:—"This idea of the liberty of peoples is diametrically opposed to the German idea of the domination of one race. It is an idea of the noblest tradition of England and France in the 19th century. It is the logical conclusion of liberal revolutions. It is part of the democratic system. It ought to be the fundamental ruling principle of peace treaties." The same idea has been prominently and frequently put forward in the speeches recently delivered by President Wilson of the United States where he has affirmed the right of all peoples to what he calls "self-determination." Whether President Wilson is prepared to carry out his principle of self-determination to its logical and legitimate conclusion and, when the time for peace arrives, to insist on the granting of it to all the world's communities who desire it, remains to be seen. But M. Albert Thomas is clearly and avowedly unwilling to do so. For in the speech already mentioned he went on to say:—"It is important to define who are the subjects of the right—the beneficiaries. It must be laid down with precision what are the limits of the right of peoples to dispose of themselves. There are formed peoples and undeveloped peoples." Also, referring to the German reply to the Allies' assertion of the right of all nations to freedom, he said:—"when the enemy declared that the people of India and Morocco ought to be allowed to decide their own lot he commits an inadmissible sophism." Here M. Thomas shows the cloven foot of the irrepressible bureaucrat and exploitationist. It is manifestly absurd to class India among undeveloped people." The people of India are the heirs of an ancient and glorious civilisation still in wonderful preservation,—a civilisation, too, which was noble and powerful and will have its attractions for all times and peoples. The late eminent Governor of Madras, Sir Thomas Munro, said of the civilisation and culture of the Hindus, that, "if civilisation can become, an article of trade between the two countries (England and India) it is England that will gain by the import cargo." We are rapidly assimilating European ideas of the art of popular government, and we have successfully displayed our national capacity to keep in efficient working order, every Western institution which has been set up in our midst by our rulers. The truth is that bureaucratic government, once introduced into any social system becomes, when a certain stage of development has been reached, a festering

gangrene which ends by deteriorating men's capacity for improvement and arresting all social advance. To end the bureaucratic system is the need of the hour in India, and how to end it is the thought which engages the minds of all. It is, therefore, too late now to deny our right to self-determination on the ground, too manifestly absurd, that we are still an "undeveloped people." God has bestowed the capacity for freedom on all men, and no man can long domineer over his fellow-man without himself falling, along with his victim, into the dismal abyss of degradation.

It is the huge military machine built up by great Empires that stands between man and his birthright of self-determination. If Germany aspires to enslave the world, it is because she has been allowed to develop her gigantic and irresistible army. Hence, if civilisation is again to flourish, all big empires must join in preventing the building up of the agencies of agression in the future and in dissolving those which now exist and are dealing destruction and devastation and threatening the human race itself with early extinction. M. Thomas says :—"If the great and small nationalities are to enjoy liberty equally, the danger of dispersion and falling to pieces can be prevented in the world by a supernational organisation. If the old system of balance has seen its day, if every people is to enjoy its liberty, it is all the more necessary that an international organisation should give it necessary guarantees and assure the solution of the general problems which had led to the grouping in great centralised states." In our opinion, the essential preliminary to sucess in forming such a supernational or international organisation is to abolish their armies and to give up all desire for exploitation of their weaker brethren. An American political writer once wrote :—"It is one's duty to love one's neighbour, but it is the duty of the individual." This piece of Machiavellian logic is merely an ingenious device of arrant hypocrisy to justify the keeping in subjection of smaller and weaker nationalities for purposes of exploitation. The moral law is quite as applicable to the concerns and intercourse of nations as it is to those of individuals, and if only the great states abolish their armies, then it will become possible to utilise the resources of human genius to build up the super-national organisation which the civilised world requires for the benefit of humanity in the future. When the ex-Tsar Nicholas, now subjected by his persecutors to cruel and undeserved insults and the sorrows of exile and incarceration, issued his famous Eirenicon more than twenty years ago, a Russian writer than living in exile in England—Mr. V. Tchertkoff —wrote in the *Fortnightly Review*:— "The evil of war can actually disappear only when men, having made up their minds to refrain from any participation in it, direct their efforts towards the true realisation of love and concord in all their mutual relations." M. Thomas also says:—"If we wish to produce an effect on the enemy, if we wish to overthrow him, we can only do so by acting in the very name of our principles." The exploitation of one nation by another must cease; all nations must have the right of self-determination, and without any reservation; and individuals of all communities must be in a position to enter into free and un-trammelled intercourse with each

other. M. Thomas feels and expresses a horror of, and wants to prevent, "the danger of dispersion and falling into peices" of the peoples now inhabiting each its own separate geographical habitat and forming a compact political organisation. It is this territorial and geographical compacting together of men of the same colour and race that has led to the evil of national state-life and its tremendous evil consequences of the exploitation and aggression of one national state or community by another. There must be freedom of dispersion for all men over the entire globe. No man has the right to stop another from going and living where he likes. It is the right to freedom of dispersion that can put an end to the inhumanity of man to man and will enable all men of all communities to bring into active exercise the feeling which is equally embodied in the golden precept of Jesus and in the Hindu doctrine of the solidarity of man. Only then will humanity be enabled to profit by the proposed supernational organisation; or even to bring it into efficient working order for the advancing of human well-being.

Notes and Comments.

At the Tiruvalluvar Commemoration held at Mylapore on the 25th May last Mrs. Besant who was present said :—"The Tamilians had lost the habit of expressing their thoughts in their own language." Only just previously to her, Messrs. Chidambaram Pillay, Kuppuswami Mudaliar, and Pandit Balasarasvathi Krishnama Chariar had all spoken in Tamil about the greatness of Tiruvalluvar and his work, and all three are Tamilians and scholars, highly esteemed. It is only those who have been spoiled and "lost" their heads and hearts through English education that have also "lost" the habit of expressing their thoughts in our sweet mother-tongue.

* * *

It would, therefore, be well if these wonderfully "educated" men—men who proudly monopolise the title of "educated" to themselves–will not come forward to speak at gatherings like these and will be content to be present only as listeners. But they are irrepressibly "presumptuous" and want to spout forth at such gatherings what they have learned of Western ideas, and in Western words, phrases and sentences got up by rote. Let them be pleased to allow all genuine Tamilians and scholars to have this Commemoration Day and similiar occasions entirely to themselves. All will go well, for they never talk nonsense.

* * *

Men in these days speak volubly of "elevating" the untouchables. If touching the untouchables can elevate them, then all touchables—the "Aryans" and "Dravidians" about whom Sir Subramania Iyer waxed eloquent in his opening speech and with prodigious Western erudition—are not able to produce a single work like Tiruvalluvar's Kural, in spite of the fact that they are prodigies of Western education? His reply is,—"That so noble a man took birth in a lowly caste is not a matter of surprise to those who believe that the moral government of the world and human evolution as a part of its affairs are under the guidance of the spiritual hierarchy appointed for the duty by the Ishvara of our solar system." All this Theosophical chatter has had its day. It was Olcott and Blavatsky that made them current in South India to which they came as their last refuge when they had been found out in Bombay. No sane man outside the Theosophical Society now believes in them ; and even inside that society many have no faith in these exploded juggleries. Sir Subramania Iyer himself only says that certain people 'believe' in them. Belief by a few people is certainly no proof. Even the Christian scripture says :—"Prove all things." The Hindus always place their doctrines on the irrefragable basis of "Pramanas"—sources

of proof, sources of true knowledge. So great a man as the late Prof. Max Muller has called this "a very high distinction of Indian philosophy." It is only a few faddists that still "believe" in the cock-and-bull stories circulated by Olcott and Blavatsky about the "Mahatmas" still living in their "mountain retreat" and forming "a spiritual hierarchy" entrusted by "the Isvara of our solar system" with the "moral government of the world." The government of the world ever is, and has been, as often *immoral* as "moral"; and men often gain many good things in life by taking advantage of the former. The world will ever be like this in spite of all "spiritual hierarchies" and the "moral government" entrusted to them by "the Isvara of our solar system." So, we can afford to be as well off, or as ill off, as ever without "believing" in the existence of these superfluous personages. A "belief" in one God only has been found enough by the world so far, and we can safely dismiss these people who trouble men's fancies and even unnecessarily haunt Tiruvalluvar Commemorations.

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Saint Tiruvalluvar wrote his marvellous work because he was a man of mighty erudition and power of thought—both won by steady and unwearied application to study and meditation. It was in this sense only that he was "a perfected man," as Sir Subramania Iyer calls him,—and *not* because, as he believes, he was sent to the Tamil land by "the spiritual hierarchy" of Mahatmas who are bent on "uplifting the backward sections of humanity" and made him "appear among such sections" and "by his work and life contribute to the raising of those who have been thus lagging behind." If the "appearance" of Tiruvalluvar in the caste of "untouchables" could have been meant to "raise" it in the way Sir Subramania Iyer speaks of, why is it that they were not "raised" *before* the democratic ideas of the West were brought to India and adopted by the modernised Indians of to-day.

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Sir Subramania Iyer's reference to Tiruvalluvar as having been sent into the world by the "spiritual hierarchy" of Mahatmas reminds us of the absurd habit, that prevailed in Medieval India, of calling every great man who has done anything notable an "avatara." When once this idea gets into currency about a great man, supernatural legends gather round him and some admiring follower or disciple takes the pains to collect them all and arrange them in book form. Sometimes we have even several sets or collections of such traditions, and each school of disciples and followers has its own book of sacred tradition. It is thus that the country has been flooded with Sankara Vijayas, and lives of saints and bhaktas of all sorts, saivite, vaishnavaite, etc. Even within our own time, we have seen how a legendary life of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa has already become current and has been put into book form in the Bengalee language. Legends have gathered round even Mrs. Besant, and Sir Subramania Iyer himself, once in an admiring mood, startled us all by giving currency to the story of her previous lives in China, Egypt, Italy, India, and elsewhere. We shall not be surprised if, at an early date, legends gather round the name of Sir Subramania Iyer himself,—for it is stated in a Sanskrit work issued by the Suddha Dharma Mandalam—or in an introductory piece of Sanskrit writing contained in it—that he is the recognised and authoritative representative of that "spiritual hierarchy." India is always the land of spiritual miracle, marvel, and madness. But the rapid rise and vogue of occult societies and "spiritual hierarchies" even to-day in the full blaze of Western material civilisation is as much "to the utter discredit of our nation"—to use the language of Sir Subramania Iyer—as the untouchability condemned by him. It is a marvel of marvels that they should flourish under his own active patronage and encouragement.

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Sir Subramania Iyer indulges in a little innocent flight of imagination when he sets about to account for untouchability by "intelligible sanitary considerations." Even in the daily life of Hindu families,

we have "untouchables" of various kinds. Some of us become such by the superior sanctity gained by a bath, others by the impurity or pollution due to a birth or a death of near relatives. Are "untouchabilities" like these due to "intelligible sanitary considerations." All such guesses only show the activity of the Hindu imagination.

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Sir Subramania Iyer was long a Judge of the Madras High Court, and several times Officiating Chief Justice. He must necessarily be an authority on Comparative Law and Custom, and aware of the dictum of the great jurist, Sir Henry S. Maine, viz. "Nothing in law springs entirely from the sense of convenience." So, also, no custom can spring entirely from the sense of convenience. There is always some earlier historical circumstance on which the sense of convenience works to produce the law or custom. We have also to consider the bearing of the institution of "*tabu*" on which so many learned writers on Ethnography have bestowed much learned research. It seems, therefore, very strange to us that Sir Subramania Iyer should account for the origin of "untouchables" in India entirely by considerations of "sanitary convenience".

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Sir Subramania Iyer says that "it is certain that he (Tiruvalluvar) drew his inspiration from purely Dravidian sources." The present writer has been informed by one of the most learned Tamil Pandits in the Educational Department—and one who knows the entire Kural and all about it—and who is as well acquainted with the Mahabharata as with the Kural, that Saint Tiruvalluvar, in spite of his marvellous and original power of thought, is infinitely indebted to the Mahabharata throughout his work. The matter is worth investigation and elucidation, before a final pronouncement is made.

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Sir Subramania Iyer loses no opportunity of ventilating his views on Moksha (liberation). At this meeting, too, he said :—"Surely it is a serious error to suppose that liberation means a state of extinction of all individuality or in other words, annihilation." This is evidently meant as an attack upon the Advaitism of Sri Sankaracharya. No one wants or expects Sir Subramania Iyer to become an Advaitist. He is the apostle of the Suddha Dharma Dispensation,—whatever that may mean. He has been patronising, as such, several strange publications and especially an erroneous and absurd version of our incomparable Bhagavad-Gita which has been acceptable to all Indian Acharyas of all schools of Vedanta and to all foreign scholars in Europe and America. We know well that Sir Subramania Iyer must be far from Advaitism even as the latter is far from him. Still we would like to point out that Sir Subramania Iyer is wrong in supposing that the loss of individuality is not the same as annihilation. When the jiva loses his individuality he only loses the phenomenal limitations due to matter or maya, but becomes identical with the Atman, pure, real, and free. The Atman can never be annihilated, and it is Ananda or Bliss, in itself and noumenal, "one only without a second." *Manonasa*, or annihilation of *mind*—which, by nature, is material and therefore Maya—is necessary for liberation. For, the mind is that which leads to the perception of duality through the medium of the senses. The Atman is beyond Maya altogether and untouched by the phenomenal limitations of matter. So, it can undergo no change or annihilation, and constitutes the one supreme noumenal Reality.

Olla Podrida.

The National University has now constituted its Senate and its Syndicate, its general and special courses and its Boards of studies, etc. etc. The University will have its Arts courses, and its technical courses. The Colleges which it controls are all very near—on the map. The courses of studies are all clearly laid down—on paper. The *alumni* will all be properly employed in—Utopia. And they will all be trained in religious universalism

—which means nothing, and in social universalism—which means chaos.

* * *

A correspondent to the *Hindu* suggests as a measure of war economy and for the reduction of the prevailing high prices that as the price of matches has gone up, matches should be sold only for *bonafide* domestic consumption etc. and not for the use of the votaries of the fine art of smoking. When madmen in the West use fire to destroy life and property, will madmen in the East agree not to use fire to light cigarettes? Sane conceptions as to the meaning and value and goal of life must prevail before real reformation of social and political life can be achieved.

* * *

Look at the recent assault on Mr. K. B. Ramanatha Iyer. The number of assaults on peaceful Brahmins is on the increase. Is this a distant ripple of the tidal wave of hate now deluging the world? Who is to bring into the world again the ambrosia of peace and love and dispassion and devotion? No mere patched up peace or social and political travail can bring about this happy consummation.

* * *

The Arya Vysia ladies met in Conference recently and the Presidential address told the ladies' world what patriotic ladies should do in modern India. It has proved to an admiring world that the unjustly humbled woman of India's past has dragged down the usurping man with her!!! Where have both of them gone? The only types of womanhood held up to our admiration are Rajput queens, Rani of Jhansi, and Mrs. Gandhi. A strange assortment, truly!!! The Presidential address has the merit of going beyond all the reformers put together. It has banished early marriage and widowhood and has made every woman the incarnation of learning and valour. It has banished jewel mania and substituted the white cloths of Nair women for the costly silk and lace cloths of the East coast. It has conferred the franchise on women and thrown open the Bench and the Bar to our fair competitors. Hurrah! The millennium has come.

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The President of the Conference says that Indian women should "set an example to their denationalised husbands." The best way to do this is said to be to secure the franchise, monopolise the professions, and wear white cloths!!!

SCRUTATOR.

Shakespeare and the future of Indian Drama.

BY K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI, B.A., B.L.

(*Continued.*)

It may be asked whether Shakespeare who is pre-eminently a Western writer can have a message for us in regard to the newer adjustments of life and literature in this country. But if we understand Shakespear's nature aright we can well realise that he was not only one of the greatest of Englishmen fully loyal to the genius of his race and fully capable of expressing that genius but he had a remarkable universality with a special beauty of temperament all his own which had in it something very much akin to the Indian genius. He was the Master of Revels to mankind as was beautifully said by Emerson and his essentially joyous nature, after it underwent the pains of grief and gloom, blossomed into a perfect serenity and sweetness of nature and a perfection of reposefulness and trustfullnes in Providence—qualities which are among the most Indian of Indian qualities. His was a nature that "save life steadily and save it whole" and he was thoroughly alive to the diviner side of life. "His calm creative perspicacity" to use a famous phrase of Carlyle and his conception of a governing and overruling Providence and his profound sense of the evenascence of life are qualities which show his spiritual kinship with the Indian *genius*. The famous passage which occurs in the Tempest,

The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,

The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve
And, like this in substantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made of, and our little life
Is rounded off with a sleep.
There is a divinity that shapes our ends
Rough hew them how we will.
Fate, show us thy forces, ourselves we do not owe
What is decreed must be and be this so.

may be referred to as bearing out the truth of the view stated above

Besides his universality of nature and the special points of kinship between Sheakespear's genius and the Indian temperament there are certain unique qualities which should be borne in miud so that we may derive the fullest measure of inspiration for the future uplift of Indian Drama. The most remarkable element in Sheakspeare's genius is his intimate acquaintance with all the elements of human nature, its innumerable pains and pleasures and its mingled greatness and pettiness, its soarings into the empyrean of self-sacrificing renunciation and its struggle in the mire of sense-enjoyments. Mathew Arnold says,

All pains immortal spirit must endure
All weakness which impairs, all griefs which bow
Finds their sole speech in the victorious brow.

The familiar ines of Gray,

To him the mighty mother did unveil
Her awful face : The dauntless Child
Stretche'd forth his little arms and smiled.

show his clarity into the innermost workings of Nature's processes. Shakespeare's personality is best understood not so much by the contemporary and posthumous descriptions and estimates as by the study of his entire works. Emerson well says 'Shakespeare is the only biographer of Shakespeare". We may refer to some aspects of his personality so that we may understand him properly and fully. His gentleness was the main theme of contemporary praise. Ben Jonson speaks of him as 'gentle Shakespeare'; and his sonnets form the immortal glorification of the spirit of comradeship and friendship that was one of the most beautiful traits in his nature. His keen love of music is also abundantly evident throughout his plays not only in those gems of musical art scattered throughout his dramas but also in his general descriptions of the sweetness of music and its effects upon men.

The man that has no music in himself,
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, strategems, and spoils;

Merchant of Venice

That strain again ! it had a dying fall :
O ! it came o'er my ear like the sweet south
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odour.

Twelfth Night

Dowden says of him, "Not that Shakespeare was hostile to learning but he knows that a perfect education should include the culture through the actual experience of the senses and the affections." Another aspect of Shakespear's personality that should be remembered by us is that he had a first-rate imagination working on a first-rate experience, though he was in no sense a scholar of the first magnitude. Indeed this combination of a thorough acquaintance with all sides of life coupled with his deficiency in the accuracy and profundity of scholarship is the most telling of all arguments which refute the view that ascribes to Bacon the authorship of Shakespeare's plays.. Another important feature about his personality is his abiding reverence for womanhood. He understood the supreme power of woman as the saviours, martyrs or destroyers of life. He delighted, however, in depicting the sweeter, and higher elements of womanhood. Coleridge says " Shakespeare has no

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innocent adulteries, no interesting incests, no virtuos vices.' The unredeemed villany of Iago and the pitiful wreckage of life in the case of Hamlet and Othello are due in the one instance to the shutting out of the uplifting power of woman's virtuous love and in the other to that element of doubt of woman's purity and truth. On the other hand, in the case of Brutus' Portia and of the other Portia whose sweetness and culture turns sorrow into joy and earth into heaven in the Merchant of Venice we find Shakespeare's conception of the power of womanhood for the spirit of man. We may refer in this connection to what I regard as the most perfect expression of Shakespeare's insight into the tender realities of woman's nature, namely his delineation of Hermione as the divinely appointed power that worked out the redemption of Leontes through love. The description of Hermione by Leontes towards the close of the play is among the great gems of literature. The sentence "She was as tender as infancy and grace" speaks volumes in regard to the highest elements of woman's nature as understood by Shakespeare.

Shakespeare's another great trait is his stern opposition to the anarchy of democracy; while he was fully alive to the simplicity and goodness of the people at large, and while he had nothing but contempt for tyrants who trouble the poor for the attainment of their petty ends he always stood up for social harmony and cohesion and was not in favour of the will of the untaught and untrained multitude being elevated to the dignity of a commandment of God. If we bear in mind all these great elements of Shakespeare's personality and remember also the special peculiarities of his dramatic style, characterisation, development of plot and the enforcement of great moral lessons we shall be able to apply in a fruitful manner the lessons drawn from a study of his personality and his works to the literary development of India.

Thus I have always felt, that we can derive inspiration from Shakespeare in regard to our future literary growth and development, not only because of the reasons already urged above, but also because though literature should be really national, interchange of literature is a meant of literary inspiration and a real solvens of national differences. The universal elements in all the literatures of the world should be understood and appreciated by each literature, afterwards to take great forward steps in the course of its own development. Sir Sidney Lee says "No great national literature ever subsisted without foreign nutrition. All pieces of great literature are portions of a mighty chain of which the links are forged in many workshops." In literature as in life the question is not 'what is the extent of indebtedness' but 'what is the total affluence due to inherited riches and wisely borrowed loans.' The foreign debt of English literature is perhaps the largest in the world but it has used the loans in such a way as to increase its affluence of literary achievement to an unprecedented degree and this circumstance has enabled it to repay its debt a hundred-fold by pulling up the other literatures of the world into a state of higher self expression.

Such are the lessons which we learn from a careful study of Shakespeare and his age. We have now to understand the past of Indian drama and its evolution down to the present day so that we may carry it into higher stages of perfection with the help derived from a deep study of the Poet and Dramatist. It is now one of the commonplaces of Indian literary criticism, though once it was one of the controversial points, that Indian drama was indigenous in origin and owed nothing to Greece in respect of inspiration or development. Indian drama arose as a portion of the religious festivals of the country and were primarily inspired by the great stories contained in the Indian Puranas and the Itihasas. If we realise the great and innumerable points of kinship between Shakespeare's drama and the Indian Romantic Drama we can see how a study of Shakespeare's plays will give a new impetus to dramatic composition which will be a natural development out of the Indian drama of the classic age. The chief features of difference between the classical and the romantic drama are due to the

fundamental differences between the spirit of Hellenism and the spirit of Christianity and romance. The power determining the action of characters in the classical drama was concieved of as fate or destiny. In the Western romantic drama of which Shakespeare is the supreme exponent, individual responsibility under the control and guidance of a god of love takes the place of an inexorable destiny. The Greek genius took hold of the world by its outward and sensuous side while Christianity tried to take hold of the world by its inward and spiritual and supersensuous side. The Greek ideal was harmony while the romantic ideal was an attempt towards the attainment of the infinite—a difference of outlook exemplified in the orderly columns of the Greek temples and the soaring spires of Gothic architecture. The Greek ideal aimed at simplicity while the romantic ideal was profusion of adornment. In the Greek drama tragedy and comedy were kept severely apart but in modern Western romantic drama there was a harmonious fusion of the tragic and the comic elements without in any degree affecting the tragic or the comic spirit of the play. In all these respects Indian drama is very much akin to the modern Western romantic drama and differs from the classical drama. In the conception of drama also there is a great deal of similarity between the Indian and romantic definitions. Ward says "Dramatic literature is that form of composition which accomodates itself to the demands of art, whose method is initiation in the way of action." In the Indian Alankara Sastras we have a similar definition which is as beautiful as it is compendious वाक्यं रसात्मकं काव्यं is the definition of poetry while drama is defined as दृश्यं काव्यं. Another point of kinship between Shakespeare's drama and Indian drama is the scant respect paid to the unities of time and place and the special attention paid to the development of the story from out of itself. The supreme genius in the realm of Indian dramatic art, Kalidasa, is like Shakespeare in his caring more for the dramatic delineation of character than to originality of plot. As Emerson says well "great men are more distinguished by range and extent than by originality. The greatest genius is the most indebted man." Besides these points of similarity there are certain special features about Indian drama which we must bear in mind before we take up the task of improving it. Pure tragedy has never been as yet in India. One reason of this seems to me to be a deep-seated and fundamental trait in the Indian nature which tries to see pleasure as well as pain with an equal eye, to transmute the sorrows of life into the joy of renunciation. This special feature of the Indian character is the cause of that serene atmosphere of love and renunciation and self-poised peace which we find at the close of the immortal epics of the land which conclude not with the overthrow of the enemy, or the aquisition of the throne but with the attainment of the lotus feet of God with a self-composure and peace born of a perfect and fulfilled life. This element should not be forgotten in any future attempt to write pure tragedies in this country. And any great writer that attempts pure tragedy should try as far as possible to soften the terror and the pity of it in the light of Indian religious conceptions and should further supplement such works by other works which will reveal the fullness of the Indian outlook upon the world—an outlook which always looks through passion to peace, from self-affirmation to self-control and through self-assertion to self-sacrifice. Another special feature about the Indian drama is the absence of all historical plays. Shakespeare's historical plays have made more for the spirit of pride in the greatness of the country than professedly historical treatises. We have to write not only great historical works in prose but we must produce great historical plays if we want to make the feeling of patriotism an ever living fountain of inspiration. Two special excellences of Indian drama which

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are not found anywhere else are the setting given to Indian plays amidst the loveliest scenes of nature and their profound interpretation of religion, the transfiguration of life through the influence of love. The prologue and the Bharatavakyam contribute to the spirit of universal love and peace which are quite in harmony with the religious atmosphere of the place.

Passing in brief review the past and the present of Indian drama we may refer to the change that came over the drama in the course of the centuries that followed the classical period of Indian dramatic literature. The popular plays in the vernaculars of the land steadily followed in the wake of the classical dramas but they conform less and less to the standard of the classical dramatic composition partly by reason of the need for being popular in nature and appeal and partly by the fact that the classical drama got into the hands of smaller literary coteries which, self-divorced from the refreshing atmosphere of popular appeal, tended to lose more and more its hold upon the realities of life and simplicity of emotional expression. The result of this state of things was that music began to usurp the place of poetry as the medium of dramatic expression because beauty and vigour of thought are necessary to enable verse to find favourable reception in men's hearts while music is a spontaneous generator of pleasure irrespective of the weight of thought carried by the song. Sanskrit drama was never strong in the higher forms of humour and in the popular plays wit degenerated mostly into broad farce. The bommalattams form a by no means negligible feature of the drama of the land. They have now practically ceased to exist but those who have witnessed bommalattam performances can realise how much can be made out of seemingly unpromising materials in the direction of interpreting life and thought in a powerful and moving way. I have witnessed some wonderful bommalattam performances and the most perfect exhibition of the art of dancing I have ever seen in my life is the dancing of the kinchin figure which I witnessed at the beginning of a performance of Harischandra by a bommalattam troupe in the Tanjore District. The rhythm and grace of the movement which is the real fascination of artistic dancing were exhibited in a form which won frequent and enthusiastic rounds of applause. The modern amateur dramatic societies are trying to lift the stage from the low condition which it is occupying at present. But if they try as they are doing now to make a new departure which is out of touch with the Indian Drama of the classical age and which does not assimilate some of the special excellences of dialogue and tone and gesture acquired by the actors of the popular drama in the course of centuries, their contribution to the future of the Indian drama would not be as great as it might otherwise be.

Finally the influence of Tagore must be mentioned who in his beautiful plays, which however are more lyrical than dramatic in their nature, has shown new possibilities in the realm of dramatic art. In his Chitra, Post Office, King of the Dark Chamber, Malini and other plays he has gone to the very fountain-head of inspiration as described already and has created a new tradition of beauty of sentiment, brightness of outlook and a prevailing beauty.

(To be continued.)

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Tantaene Animis Caelestibus Irae?

(Can such anger dwell in heavenly minds).

VIRGIL.

This year's Provincial Conference at Conjeeveram has in my humble opinion proved no better than the Delhi Conference in its results. The first has

been as much marred by the want of political sagacity and wisdom on the part of the so-called leaders in this Presidency as the second by its official beauracrats.

The Conference lasted for three days of which two days were spent in vain over a part of the resolution on man-power, which has been given undue importance if not notoriety by a wealth of eloquence and oratory which could have been employed for better purposes than "to win a paltry political success."

The one resolution that jealously devoured all the time was that on man-power and it was moved by no less a personage than Mrs. Besant, the President of last year's Congress. Somehow the opinion that she is "the political saviour of the Presidency" has taken firm hold of the minds of some of the so-called leaders who are more advanced in age than in wisdom. Mrs. Besant has taken her Congress Presidentship too seriously I fear, and hence her repeated assertions to her followers to worship her as the Delphic Priestess. To this strange delusion she combined another stranger faculty of continually citing the names of Messrs. Tilak, Gandhi, Jinna, and others as those who have never ceased to pay their respects to her and follow her in whatever she undertook, though she has been warned more than once of this blunder by Mr. Kasturiranga Aiyangar and others through the Press. Her leadership has been Satis Superque. But the "hot-headed youths" have had some experience of these people, and they know too well whether those illustrious men are really the leaders or the followers. As was well pointed out by Mr. Satyamurti in his able speech, Mr. Tilak when he was in Madras distinctly stated that it would be impossible to recruit a single man unless a statutory pronouncement in favour of Home Rule for India, is immediately made in the British Parliament.

The citizen army to which Mrs. Besant refers in clause b of her resolution is entirely a new idea and it was not suggested either by H. E. the Viceroy or the Hon'ble Mr. Khaparde, that bold and fearless leader of public opinion, in the Delhi Conference. Every one in the country is desirous to see the Indian Defence force—the Indian section of it—to be brought to the status of a citizen army, and this opinion is endorsed by the resolution on the Indian Defence Force in the Conjeevaram Conference itself. When such was the case there was no necessity for Mrs. Besant to have introduced it in the Resolution that was given to her care and which, let it be remembered, was purely a response to the Viceroy's appeal. Clause b was certainly inconsistent and illogical as it stood, and therefore it is that Mr. Rajagopalachari said "if it is passed it will lull the Government into a false sense of security." The "Hot-headed youths" were cut and dry in their criticism since they have greater enthusiasm for the country's future and lesser fear for the bureaucracy which, strange to say, has driven some leaders to be chameleons in their views on our political aspirations.

Mrs. Besant was provoked beyond reason, and she not only goaded two of her well-known lieutenants to retort, but followed suit with a vehemence which was befitting only in a schoolboy who having been defeated in a game threatens his adversary that should he step in his street he would receive a good wigging. Furor Arma Ministrat.

It was owing to her persistence that the Conference lost much of its importance, and it was owing to her that the good counsel offered by Mr. Kasturiranga Aiyengar was thrown over. The Conference became a duel scene, and where sobriety of judgment and calm reasoning should reign hot retorts and angry vapourings came in. The resolution that she moved was a combination of all the important matters affecting the Conference and why it was entrusted to her seems unexplainable to me unless it be owing to the fact that she wanted to concentrate all the importance of the conference on herself. This "the hot-headed youths" would not allow and all glory to them who raised, their voice against her! "Veritatis Simplex Oratio Est."

Mrs. Besant and Mrs. Sarojinee Devi—the two loudly-trumpeted champions of women franchise and equality of sexes—have proved miserable failures. The one who prided herself on being "a wandering singer" was nothing more than that and was quite "unversed in the arts of political warfare and unequal to the situation." Her address extempore as it was, highly inspiring and vivacious, however gratifying to the person who delivered it, was an insult to a Conference where the best talents of the country were assembled not to hear "the warbling wood-notes wild" but to get a masterly outline of the situation and the lines on which they should preceed to achieve our political aspirations. It was owing to the want of political wisdom on the part of Mrs. Sarojinee and the utter absence of "give and take" policy on the part of Mrs. Besant that the Conference witnessed a useless prolongation of an unnecessary discussion, a new principle of voting which was not essential, an utter disregard for many important resolutions like the resolution on the internment of Messrs. Mahammed Ali and Shakut Ali, an utter absence of dignity and propriety in the matter of replying to an amendment, and, last of all but not least in importance, the evil which is inevitable if "the leaders do not put themselves enrapport with the bulk of the delegates."

Coimbatore, N. S. VENKATESAN.

'Civil' Marriage.

According to Hegel, the great step in progress achieved by the modern European civilisation was the discovery that even secular pursuits are a religious occupation. The modern or New Indian, as is the case with easy proselytes, goes one step further and makes the invention that even religious pursuits are a secular occupation. And the result is the advocacy of 'Civil' marriages such as should supersede religious marriages in vogue, the installation of secularity in the place of religiousness, the reduction of marriage to a mere contract. Money obtained by the sale of a dog does not bark, so consorting with a beauty of a foreign caste is not ill-assorting—so runs the modern formula.

Along with this goes the myth of the depression of women in the East. Those who compare the East and the West in this respect and make out the tyranny of the Eastern man, do not distinguish between the different stages in the life of the woman. In the East it is proverbially true that a woman'

who is old enough to be wife but not to be mother, is less respected but respect augments with motherhood. In the West the reverse is the case; the bare wife is adored, the owner of children is at a discount. In the West women are treated as the prostitutes are treated in India; the fewer the children the merrier the women, the greater the esteem in which they are held. It brings home forcibly the gross, the crass, the rank materialism and carnalism that is the instrument of the modern marriage 'reform' movement among the Hindus, and of which 'Civil' marriages will be so many monuments. What other result could be expected when the Isabella of Keats, for instance, is a text book for the Intermediate students for a series of years.

Mrs. Dorothy Jinarajadasa an internationalist by recent and apparent habit, wants to lead the 'national' movement in the women section. She holds forth a bribe for the allegiance of Hindu women. She puts on herself their dress and wants to put into them her soul. 'I will *look* like you; you will *be* like me'—that is the subtle trick employed by these social conquerors of the Hindu race. These Jesuits are not yet discovered, rather they have been discovered, they are not yet proclaimed. What is now in progress in India is a vast enveloping movement on behalf of Theosophy and coming Christ and the next sub-race. Babu B. C. Pal himsel has well established the position that Theosophy is not a spiritual but a spiritist or psychical movement, that Mrs. Besant is not a spiritual influence but a psychical battery. Mr. B. P. Wadia, the Treasurer or Kubera of every national movement is just now tackling the labourers. As many nets as possible, as various nets as possible are being laid in as many directions as possible, with as much insidiousness as possible, on behalf of the preposterous ambition of giving a religion even to India, of successfully seeming to carry these coals to this Newcastle. But I am sure that at the last moment, when within an ace of success the tricksters will be undone and the future historian will lay a finger on his lips and exclaim: "Such ado about nothing"!

It would be a monstrous mistake if 'Civil' marriages should commend themselves to the spiritual-minded Hindu because the Theosophist (who so much admires the spirituality of the Hindu) is now in for such marriages. There is only one thing in common between the Hindu and the Theosophist: and that is, the belief in the Karma theory. And this belief of the Western Theosophist is a proof and the need of his rank materialism. He or she loves so much and insatiably the carcass of the human body that he or she is appalled to think that he or she should not be born again. While re-birth is for the Hindu something *from* which he desires to be liberated, re-birth is for the Western Theosophist something *by* which he is liberated from the fear of disappearing from the world which he loves so much. To the Western Theosophist re-birth is salvation, while for the Hindu freedom from re-birth is salvation. Mark the inscription on the cremation slab of Colonel Olcott: the wish of Theosophists towards that friend is that he may speedily come here again.

The Western Theosophists are, therefore, the grossest materialists, who were suffocated even by such spirituality as there was in current Christianity, and embraced the Karma theory which was like a consoling balm to them; perverted its meaning to their own exceeding convenience, scored further the verbal victory of falling in line with the spiritual East by the adoption of that theory, were astonished by their own success, obsessed by it, were overcome by its glamour, and with the Western vanity became eager to fill the obstreperous trump of fame with their name; and from humble seekers and students in search of consolation, these refugees and runaways from mother wit and mother church now pose as prophets and as manufacturers by constructive, intimate (even to bath-giving) education, of gods and races. And India the patient, the home of tolerance, lying ever ready for exploitation of every sort, is being exploited by these adventurers.

The Karma theory has disturbed their equilibrium in another manner. For the first time they were authentically taught that each is the artificer of his own destiny. Hence develops an ironical view of life, a tendency to take up and let go causes in a happy-go-lucky fashion, an abandonment of deep earnestness for swift vehemence, e.g, defending the caste one day, demolishing it the next day or the same night and so on endlessly. At the same time a cruel and utterly heartless dalliance in words is daily perpetrated, calling all this mischief progress and liberty and spirituality and nationalism.

Those who oppose our caste and marriage ordinances may be expected to do so in the aspect of doctrine or discipline or both. It was the taxing discipline that first provoked the revolt. And since the truth of the doctrine could be realized only by perseverance in the discipline, the doctrine also was disclaimed. They are now out for 'freedom' of every sort. 'Civil' marriages have for concomitant, 'political' women. We should take care whom and what we admire. Imitation is the sincerest form of admiration.

And the ad nauseam adulation of Mrs. Besant (because she is famous among the eccentric of three continents) is rousing up and rushing up to the front numbers of 'political' women from the ranks of the Hindus. Here is a dangerous by-product of the alliance with Mrs. Besant. There is no longer any pondering over things; we are in an area of thoughtlessness. We are put for a fight, with windmills in part. Napoleon chided his subordinates for not appreciating the value of minutes. So is the Napoleaness of modern Indian politics. 'Quick march' is the formula for every thing, for things that have been long and well considered (as Home Rule) and for things that have not been considered at all. What are we to do? We are in the presence of a European Woman of Action. Babu Aravinda Ghose is said to tolerate her because he deems the import of Western energy essential. Whose will be the arresting hand, heavily and powerfully laid on this exodus of women from home, of Hindus from Hinduism, of marriages from their religious character? What will prevent the National Cause from being led by bitches and going to dogs?

Coimbatore, V. MAHALINGA IYER.

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